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SIPDIS  
TELEGRAM

October 27, 2003

To: No Action Addressee  
Action: Unknown  
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 4764 - ROUTINE)  
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PINR  
Captions: None  
Subject: UAE, OMAN FORMALIZE BORDER PACT  
Ref: None

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 04764

SIPDIS  
CXABU:  
ACTION: POL  
INFO: DAO PAO RSO AMB DCM P/M ECON  
Laser1:  
INFO: PAO

DISSEMINATION: POL  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: CDA:RAALBRIGHT  
DRAFTED: POL:JFMAYBURY  
CLEARED: NONE

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RR RUEHC RUEHZM RUEHDE RUCJACC RHEHNSC RHEFDIA  
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ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2210  
INFO RUEHZM/GCC COLLECTIVE  
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 3498  
RUCJACC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 004764

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR, NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/26/13  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [QA](#) [SA](#) [IR](#) [MU](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: UAE, OMAN FORMALIZE BORDER PACT

Ref: A) 02 Abu Dhabi 3079, B) 02 Abu Dhabi 2778

(U) Classified by Richard A. Albright, Charge  
d'Affaires, a.i., Reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

1. (U) Summary: The historical dispute between the  
UAE and Oman over their common international border  
appears to be over. On October 11, the two  
neighbors exchanged authenticated documents on the  
agreement reached on the common border from east of

Al Aqeedat to Al Daar in the north on the Arabian Gulf coast. The agreement had been signed on June 22 last year by UAE MinState for Foreign Affairs Shaykh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan (HbZ) and Omani Minister for Foreign Affairs Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah (see ref A). HbZ is expected to turn his attention next to other disputes with Iran and Saudi Arabia. End Summary.

12. (C) On October 11, the UAE and Oman exchanged authenticated documents on the agreement signed in June 2002 delineating the common border between the two countries. That signing took place in the presence of UAE President Shaykh Zayed and Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman. According to newspaper reports, the border agreed upon lies between the northern Emirate of Ras Al Khaymah and Oman's northern Musandam peninsula, specifically between the Emirati fishing village of Al Daar on the Arabian Gulf and the inland town of Al Aqeedat. We had been told last year that the border pact includes a swap involving the Omani enclave of Al Madhah in Sharjah-controlled Khor Fakkan. (Note: On October 25, a reliable source at the Ministry of Information and Culture told Polchief that the intent of the border pact was to include the Al Madhah enclave. He said details of the pact are closely held by the UAEG and are not being revealed to the press. He said he would try to confirm the information with his government sources in Sharjah and Fujairah during the month of Ramadan. End note.) Under the terms of the pact, UAE citizens within what is now Omani territory have been given the option to remain Emirati and the same is true for Omanis in what is now UAE territory. HBZ told the press that the agreement was a model of a peaceful settlement of a border dispute and would open "unlimited avenues of cooperation and integration in various fields between the two countries."

13. (C) As we reported in ref A, Shaykh Hamdan's task from his father, UAE President Zayed, was to strike a compromise in which both sides were required to give a little. Zayed's approach with this conflict, as well as with the UAE's historical border dispute with Saudi Arabia, and the UAE's quarrel with Iran over three islands Iran seized in the Arabian Gulf, has been to peacefully resolve these disputes.

14. (C) Prior to the formation of the UAE federation in 1971, Saudi Arabia and the UAE had some competing territorial claims. The contested areas included the Abu Dhabi oasis of Al Ain, the Omani oasis of Al Buraimi, the coastal strip between Abu Dhabi and Qatar, and the Zarrara-Shaybah oil fields near the border between Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The Saudis declined initially to recognize the UAE, pending a resolution of the territorial issue. Shaykh Zayed made resolution of the dispute with the Al Saud a top priority and in 1974 initialed an agreement allowing for cession by Abu Dhabi of some territory in the west of the country to Saudi Arabia in exchange for the establishment of diplomatic relations (ref A). Due to the highly sensitive nature of the issue, details are difficult to confirm. A source of ours in the oil business told us that most of the Saudi-UAE border remains unresolved, while the CIA World Factbook states that the treaties have not been made public. The exact alignment of the boundary with Saudi Arabia remains unpublished and is labeled approximate.

15. (C) The border dispute with Oman carried significant baggage as the Omanis -- who view the UAE as part and parcel of historical Oman -- also

refused initially to recognize the UAE. With the Omani border disagreement finally behind them, the Emiratis can now focus on the remaining border disputes. HbZ told the Ambassador October 19 that the Saudis wanted to discuss maritime borders with Qatar, and that they had also asked to hold border consultations with the UAE. HbZ referred to some of the territory near Shaybah as Emirati land. HbZ stated that the border issue need to be resolved and was planning to stop in Riyadh Oct. 20. This timing did not work out so the visit most likely will have to wait until after Ramadan.

ALBRIGHT